

# National Parks of New York Harbor Education Center

## A Partnership to Expand Learning Environments

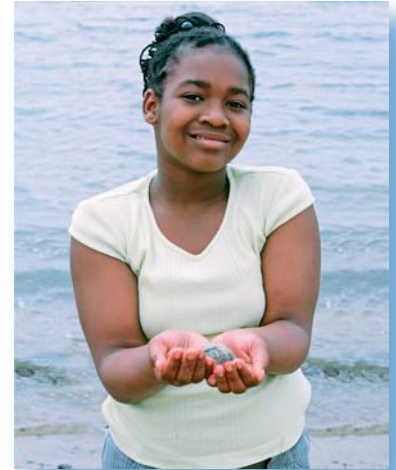
Brooklyn College and the College of Staten Island, of the City University of New York, are collaborating with the National Park Service (NPS) to develop the National Parks of New York Harbor (NPNH) Education Center that will serve a multi-faceted audience. This partnership will engage the K-12 student population of the New York Harbor region on both sides of the Hudson River, in-service and pre-service teachers of grades K-12, higher education faculty and students, non-formal educators and the community as a whole.

The Education Center serves the American public as:

- An “idea factory” where university and NPS staff and educators design, develop, evaluate and implement innovative education programs
- A “living laboratory” where professionals study and promote environmental, historic and cultural education
- A community center where the public learns how to best protect and conserve natural systems and cultural resources
- A model educational facility, reaching out to diverse and under-represented groups by tailoring programs to their interests and needs
- A professional development center for NPS staff, university faculty, their students, and a wide variety of educators

## Benefits of the Partnership

The partnership with the NPS advances the mission and strategic objectives of Brooklyn College and College of Staten Island in many ways. It advances the university commitment of being a model citizen by helping to create learning communities on an extended campus that encompasses the grounds and facilities of the two colleges, the NPS sites, those of other non-formal partners, and a wide-array of public and private agencies of the city at large.



It offers students access to national park natural areas for environmental research and field study. It provides students of social sciences with field sites that bring history to life. Brooklyn College and College of Staten Island gain a new forum for offering exciting new educational opportunities to the students and teachers of the city in a non-formal setting.

This partnership with Brooklyn College and College of Staten Island enables the National Park Service to improve and increase opportunities for students, teachers, and the general public to better understand the heritage embodied in the NPNH sites. It creates a continuum of learning that lays the foundation for stewardship of our natural and historic resources now and into the future. As envisioned in the NPS Advisory Board report, *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century*, the partnership enables the National Park System to offer “citizens of all ages opportunities to strengthen their connections to the environment and to renew their sense of wonder and appreciation for our democracy.”

## Unique Assets of Each Partner

Brooklyn College brings a distinguished faculty ready and eager to utilize the NPS resources for research and scholarship to stimulate student achievement and intellectual growth. The College of Staten Island’s Discovery Institute provides a venue for the renewal and development of teaching for its vast network of new and experienced teachers. The National Parks of New York Harbor contain sites of significant American political and social history, are home to some of the enduring symbols of our country and showcase the importance of open space and the connection between ecological and urban systems. Using the real places, objects and real world issues of the parks, this partnership can become an effective force in the reform and renewal of the local school system.

